

XV.—On a Collection of Birds from Mount Chiradzulu, in the Shiré Highlands, Nyasaland. By Capt. G. E. SHELLEY, F.Z.S. With prefatory Remarks by P. L. SCLATER.

(Plate IV.)

[MOUNT Chiradzulu is described in Capt. Selater's "Routes and Districts in Southern Nyasaland" (Geogr. Journ. 1893, p. 403) as "a striking mountain, rising to a level ridge about two miles long, which runs north and south to an elevation of nearly 5000 feet. The upper slopes are well forested, and watered by numerous small streams." Chiradzulu will be found marked in Capt. Selater's map, attached to that paper, a little to the right of the main route between Blantyre and Zomba.

Amongst the collections lately received from Sir H. H. Johnston, K.C.B., H.B.M. Commissioner, is a small series of birds from this mountain, obtained by Mr. Alexander Whyte, who visited it in July last. It contains about 40 specimens, which, as kindly determined by Capt. Shelley, are referable to 27 species. Of these three are new to science; and one of them is a very distinct and beautiful Oriole with a bright green head; another is a closely allied representative of a species lately described from the neighbouring mountain Milanji; while the third is a southern form of the rare genus *Cryptospiza*, hitherto known only from the mountains of Camaroons and Shoa.

Along with this Chiradzulu collection Sir H. H. Johnston sends a fine specimen of *Gypohierax angolensis* in its white adult plumage from Lake Nyasa, and a Bustard (*Otis melanogaster*) from the plains of Zomba. Neither of these birds, the sender informs me, was previously known to occur in these respective localities.—P. L. S.]

#### 1. ACCIPITER MINULLUS.

*Accipiter minullus* (Daud.); Sharpe, B. S. Afr. pp. 23, 796; id. Cat. i. p. 140; Selat. Ibis, 1864, p. 306.

A single female of this tiny Sparrow-Hawk.

2. *HAPALODERMA VITTATUM.*

*Hapaloderma vittatum*, Shelley; Grant, Cat. xvii. p. 480, pl. 16.

A single female of this rare Trogon. Its occurrence in Nyasaland extends its hitherto known range south by more than 10° lat.

This species is the type of *Heterotrogon*, Richmond, Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus. xvii. p. 601 (1895), where a full description of the female plumage will be found. The female differs from the male very much as in *H. narina*.

3. *BYCANISTES CRISTATUS.*

*Bycanistes cristatus* (Rüpp.); Sharpe, B. S. Afr. p. 126; Kirk, Ibis, 1864, p. 326; Grant, Cat. xvii. p. 417.

A male of this Hornbill.

4. *MELANOBUCCO ZOMBÆ.*

*Melanobucco zombæ*, Shelley, Ibis, 1893, p. 10; 1894, pp. 8, 467.

A single female of this Barbet, as yet known only from Nyasaland.

5. *BARBATULA EXTONI.*

*Barbatula extoni*, Layard; Sharpe, B. S. Afr. pp. 176, 811; Shelley, Cat. xix. p. 43.

One male of this species.

6. *BARBATULA BILINEATA.*

*Barbatula bilineata* (Sundev.); Sharpe, B. S. Afr. p. 176; Shelley, Cat. xix. p. 44, pl. 3. fig. 2.

A female of this Barbet.

This species, as well as the last, is now recorded for the first time from north of the Zambesi.

7. *TURDUS GURNEYI,*

*Turdus gurneyi*, Hartl.; Shelley, Ibis, 1893, p. 13; 1894, pp. 9, 468.

Two males and a female of this rare Thrush, already recorded from Mount Zomba and Mount Milanji.

## 8. CRINIGER FLAVOSTRIATUS.

*Andropadus flavostriata*, Sharpe, B. S. Afr. p. 206.

*Xenocichla flavistriata*, Sharpe, Cat. vi. p. 100.

A single specimen, sex undetermined.

## 9. CRINIGER PLACIDUS.

*Xenocichla placida*, Shelley, Ibis, 1894, p. 10.

A female of this species was obtained.

## 10. CRINIGER OLIVACEICEPS, sp. n.

Very similar to *C. milanjensis*, Shelley, Ibis, 1894, p. 9, pl. 1. fig. 1, in size, form, and general appearance; but brighter, and readily distinguished by the entire top of the head from the bill backward being uniform olive-yellow of the same shade as the remainder of the upper parts, and by the absence of any white over the eye; ear-coverts and eyelids brownish slate-colour, the former with white shaft-stripes; under surface of the body pale olive, strongly washed with yellow; under wing-coverts yellow; inner margins of the quills yellowish buff; bill horny black, legs slaty brown. Total length 8 inches, culmen 0·7, wing 3·7, tail 3·8, tarsus 0·95.

*Hab.* Mount Chiradzulu.

It is interesting to find that two mountains of the Shiré Highlands are each tenanted by a representative form of *Criniger*. The present collection contains a single female specimen of this species, which is fortunately in good condition.

## 11. MONTICOLA ANGOLENSIS.

*Monticola angolensis*, Sousa, Jorn. Lisb. 1888, pp. 225, 233.

*Monticola brevipes*, Sharpe, B. S. Afr. p. 221, pt. (Benguela).

One female specimen.

This species chiefly differs from *M. brevipes* in the somewhat irregular black mottling on the back; a character which, not unnaturally, suggested the idea that this form might be only the young plumage of *M. brevipes*. The present specimen—as well as five others in the British Museum from Benguela—differs in the same manner from all the more

southern specimens, so there can, I consider, be no doubt that *M. angolensis* is a good species. The line of 16° S. lat. may be taken as the boundary-line which separates the range of these two closely-allied forms.

12. *COSSYPHA CAFFRA*.

*Cossypha caffra* (Linn.); Shelley, *Ibis*, 1893, p. 14.

One female.

13. *THAMNOLÆA SUBRUFIPENNIS*.

*Thamnolæa subrufipennis*, Reichen.; Shelley, *Ibis*, 1894, p. 11.

A single male.

14. *BRADYPTERUS NYASÆ*.

*Bradypterus nyasæ*, Shelley, *Ibis*, 1893, p. 16; 1894, p. 12.

Three specimens.

15. *CAMAROPTERA OLIVACEA*.

*Camaroptera olivacea* (Vieill.); Sharpe, *Cat.* vii. p. 166.

*Camaroptera brachyura*, Sharpe, *B. S. Afr.* pp. 294, 827.

One specimen.

16. *CINNYRIS FALKENSTEINI*.

*Cinnyris falkensteini*, Reichen.; Shelley, *Ibis*, 1893, p. 16; 1894, p. 13.

A male in full adult plumage.

17. *CYANOMITRA OLIVACEA*.

*Cinnyris olivaceus* (Smith); Sharpe, *B. S. Afr.* p. 110; Gadow, *Cat.* ix. p. 78.

A pair of this species.

18. *ZOSTEROPS ANDERSSONI*.

*Zosterops anderssoni*, Shelley, *Bull. B. O. C.* i. p. v (1893); *Ibis*, 1893, p. 118.

*Zosterops senegalensis* (nec Bp.), Sharpe, *B. S. Afr.* pp. 325, 834; Gadow, *Cat.* ix. p. 181.

One male of this *Zosterops*. It is with pleasure that I meet with this species from Nyasaland, as the specimen fully bears out the characters upon which I separated it from its more northern ally *Z. senegalensis*, in being paler and having a longer wing (2·35).

19. *ALSEONAX ADUSTA*.

*Muscicapa undulata* (nec Gm.); Sharpe, B. S. Afr. pp. 339, 837.

*Alseonax adusta* (Boic); Sharpe, Cat. iv. p. 129.

One female specimen, which is paler, slightly more ashy, and has the striping of the throat less marked than any of the many specimens in the British Museum, all from Africa south of the Zambesi.

20. *TARSIGER JOHNSTONI*.

*Pogonocichla johnstoni*, Shelley, Ibis, 1893, p. 18; 1894, p. 14.

One young bird of this species, and two specimens from Milanji obtained in October. When I sent to press the portion of my "List of the Birds of Africa" containing the genus *Tarsiger*, I was unfortunately persuaded that the present species was identical with *T. orientalis*, Reichen., but I think the following key (based upon 4 or more adult specimens of both species) will show that such is not the case:—

- |     |  |                        |
|-----|--|------------------------|
| a.  | Dark terminal band of tail narrower; yellow reaching on all but the centre tail-feather to within 0·4 inch of the tip (culmen 0·55).             |                        |
| a'. | Secondaries edged with clear grey, with rarely any trace of olive margins .....  | 1. <i>stellatus</i> .  |
| b'. | Secondaries entirely edged with olive-yellow ..  | 2. <i>johnstoni</i> .  |
| b.  | Dark terminal band of tail broader; yellow reaching on all but the centre tail-feather not nearer than 0·8 inch from the tip (culmen 0·55) ..... | 3. <i>orientalis</i> . |

The young bird is, I think, worth describing in conjunction with two immature birds in the British Museum, labelled *T. stellatus*, ♂, East London, June (F. A. Barratt), and *T. orientalis*, ♂, Kilimanjaro, August (H. C. V. Hunter).

*T. stellatus*.—Upper parts uniform olive-green, with a little chrome-yellow on the upper tail-coverts. Tail: two centre feathers, the inner web of the next pair, and the outermost web of the tail dark brown; remainder of the tail brownish yellow, duller towards the ends of the feathers, and the dark terminal band of the adult only present on the third pair

of feathers from the centre. Under surface nearly uniform buffish yellow, paler on the chin, cheeks, and upper throat, brighter on the lower throat, slightly shaded with olive on the crop and sides of the body, and passing into white down the centre of the abdomen; ear-coverts ashy olive, with ill-defined yellowish shaft-stripes; wing dark brown with ashy-olive edges to the feathers above; under wing-coverts whitish yellow, pale inner margins of the quills almost white.

*T. johnstoni*, ♀, July.—Similar to the last, but differs in having a few terminal spots of buffish chrome, with partial black edges scattered over each series of wing-coverts; feathers of the sides of the throat, of the whole crop, and sides of the body with broad olive edges; tail rather brighter, and with the pattern the same as in the adult, but with the terminal dark bar decidedly narrower.

*T. orientalis*.—Differs in having most of the feathers of the top and sides of the head with shaft-stripes, widening towards their ends, of rich ochre-buff with partial jet-black edges; feathers of the upper back and many of the wing-coverts with similar, but much larger spots; the few yellow upper tail-coverts mostly tipped with black; the tail-feathers mostly with broad blackish edges and narrow dark ends, except one pair, which has the end third uniform blackish brown.

It is probable that each of these three species goes through similar phases of plumage, and that it is a young specimen of *T. orientalis* which has been described as *T. guttifer* (Reichen. Orn. Monatsb. 1895, p. 76), but I have not seen the type. The mottled plumage of the young, together with the rather long plain tarsus, shows, I consider, that *Tarsiger* belongs to the same subfamily as the Robins and Redstarts.

## 21. MALACONOTUS BLANCHOTI.

*Laniarius poliocephalus* (nec Licht.); Shelley, Ibis, 1894, p. 16.

*Malaconotus blanchoti*, Steph. Gen. Zool. xiii. p. 161, ex Levaill.

One male of this fine Bush-Shrike.



J. G. Meulemans del. et lith.

Mintern Bros. imp.

ORIOULUS CHLOROCEPHALUS.

22. *ORIOLOUS CHLOROCEPHALUS*, sp. n. (Plate IV.)

Entire head and throat uniform bright sage-green; a broad collar, an inch wide, and the under surface of the body rich golden yellow; remainder of the upper parts mostly olive-green, a shade darker than the head; on the wings the green shades into blue-grey on the outer webs of the greater and primary coverts and the quills, and, with the exception of the innermost ones, the remainder of the quills greyish black, with very partially defined ashy inner margins. Tail: the four outer pairs of feathers with bright yellow ends, increasing regularly in breadth from 0·3 to 2 inches at the shaft of the outer feather; remainder of the feathers olive-green, with the quills and portion of the inner webs black, which latter colour is scarcely more pronounced on the upper surface. Under wing-coverts bright yellow, with a few of the larger ones mottled with olive, and the outer greater series white, with some dusky marks near the primary coverts. Bill pale reddish brown; legs apparently slaty grey. Total length 10 inches, culmen 1·1, wing 5·3, tail 4·3, tarsus 1.

This very remarkable Oriole, of which a single specimen marked ♀, apparently in full plumage, is in Mr. Whyte's collection, is distinguished from every other member of the genus by the following characters:—the green head, the sharply defined yellow collar round the back and sides of the neck, the olive back, and the mostly greyish-blue edges of the wing-feathers. It agrees with typical Orioles in form, size, and the reddish-brown colour of the bill, and its nearest ally I consider to be *O. nigripennis* of the Gold Coast.

In Africa the genus *Oriolus* is now represented by nine species, of which eight are confined to the Ethiopian Region, *O. galbula* being the only migrant.

23. *LAMPROCOLIUS SYCOBIUS*.

*Lamprocolius sycobius* (Licht.); Shelley, *Ibis*, 1893, p. 22; 1894, p. 19.

One specimen from Chiradzulu has many of the feathers brown, while two from Zomba, collected in June, are in the full metallic plumage which adult birds of this genus are supposed never to lose.



24. *AMYDRUS MORIO.*

*Amydrus morio* (L.); Shelley, *Ibis*, 1893, p. 22; 1894, p. 19.

One adult male. Mr. Whyte remarks that he found this species nesting in holes in the cliffs in July.

25. *SYCOBROTUS STICTIFRONS.*

*Sycobrotus stictifrons* (Fisch. & Reichen.); Shelley, *Ibis*, 1893, p. 22; 1894, p. 19.

One pair of this species.

26. *CRYPTOSPIZA AUSTRALIS*, sp. nov.

*Cryptospiza reichenowi* (nec Hartl.); Shelley, *Ibis*, 1894, p. 471.

General plumage dark brown, with a very faint olive shade, underpart generally slightly paler; rump, upper tail-coverts, and broad edges to the outer webs of the four innermost secondaries bright crimson; remainder of the back, the ends of the greater wing-coverts, and the flanks are slightly washed or mottled with crimson: bill black; legs dark brown. Total length 4·4 inches, culmen 0·45, wing 2·2, tail 1·8, tarsus 0·7, middle toe with claw 0·8, hind toe 0·5.

*Hab.* Shiré Highlands.

One of the females has a few minute crimson feathers at the gape, which are not present in the other two specimens.

27. *FRANCOLINUS JOHNSTONI.*

*Francolinus johnstoni*, Shelley, *Ibis*, 1894, p. 24; Grant, *Cat.* xxii. p. 559.

A single female specimen.

This species is interesting as a local form of *F. hildebrandti*, one of the common Francolins of the Masai district, ranging from the Equator to the Pangani River, while the present species is probably confined to Nyasaland, and is as yet known to occur only in the Shiré Highlands.

Mr. Ogilvie Grant first pointed out the fact that *F. hildebrandti*, Cab., *J. f. O.* 1878, pp. 206, 243, pl. 4. fig. 2, is the female of *F. altumi*, Fisch. & Reichen., *J. f. O.* 1884, p. 179, pl. 2, which is fully borne out by the specimens of *F. johnstoni* sent by Mr. A. Whyte with the sexes marked.